

NSC BRIEFING

27 August 1953

FRENCH ACTION IN MOROCCO CREATES  
NEW PROBLEMS

I. By installing a new sultan, France can now revamp Moroccan administration:

- A. Basic conflicts--Moroccan hopes vs. French intrenchment--unresolved.
- B. American unpopularity will increase.
- C. US airbases and treaty rights endangered.

II. Act of dethronement:

- A. Government yielded to vested interests, followed by enthronement of puppet sultan.
- B. Superficial modernization of administration is expected.

III. French gains outweighed by its losses:

- A. Replacement of able monarch by figurehead gains reactionary and opportunistic support temporarily.
- B. Strong middle-class alienated.
- C. El Glaoui's allegiance not permanent.
  - 1. He is likely to make excessive demands.
  - 2. French may have to resort again to divide-and-rule tactics to curb him.
- D. Increase in native animosity:
  - 1. Embitterment of moderate nationalists.
    - a. Hard-core membership---100,000.
    - b. Sympathizers---2,000,000.

2. Nationalists more likely to listen to Communist anti-US propaganda.
  - a. Communist membership---5,000.
  - b. Hard-core is several hundred.
    - (1) Mainly European.
  - c. Nationalists probably will go underground.
    - (1) Have no arms for full-scale rebellion.
    - (2) Will try to obtain foreign assistance, secure weapons, subvert native troops.
3. Isolated acts of violence are taking place.
- E. Prolonged agitation forces France to maintain 66,000 security forces, indirectly affecting contribution to NATO.

#### IV Reaction to French policy:

- A. UK and Netherlands will support France's action.
- B. Spain will give no more than tacit support because of its policy of rapprochement with Arab states.
- C. Arab-Asian bloc denunciation and demand for UN Security Council.
- D. Poses a dilemma for US.
  1. Support for France would antagonize Arab-Asians.
  2. Support for Arab-Asians would alienate NATO partner.
  3. USSR aware of rift in Western alliance need expend no effort on this score.

V US position in Morocco worsened:

- A. American popularity with natives will be reversed.
- B. Suspicions of French residents and officials regarding American intentions will be increased.
- C. American airbases will be primary targets if nationalists or Communists engage in terrorism.
- D. US-Moroccan treaty likely to be denounced by new sultan.
  - 1. France has long sought annulment of US special treaty rights
  - 2. Would end commercial open door.